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GOVERNOR RESTRICTS IN-PERSON LEARNING FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS

Santa Barbara Unified School District (file photo)

COVID-19 / JUL 17 2020 03:26 PM / BYEDHAT STAFF / 24 COMMENTS / READS 3850

By edhat staff

Governor Gavin Newsom released guidelines for schools to reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic on Friday, restricting any county from hosting in-person learning while on the state monitoring list.

This includes San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura along with 29 other counties on the state's "watch list" to conduct remote classes this fall.

Newsom said schools could not reopen with physical classes until they stay off the monitoring list for two consecutive weeks. However, local school districts and public-health officials will then decide when to reopen.

For the 26 counties that are allowed to reopen their schools, most of which are in remote sections of California, all staff and students in third grade and above must wear masks. Younger students will be encouraged but not required to wear masks.

The state's monitoring list provides benchmarks for active cases and hospitalizations compared to population size to determine when a county is allowed to reopen. In the past few weeks Governor Newsom re-issued stricter orders closing business sectors in counties whose COVID-19 numbers continue to increase.

There are at least 356,000 confirmed cases in the state, with 7,345 reported deaths.

The Santa Barbara Unified School District responding to the Governor's mandate stating they will follow the orders and open the school year with 100% distance learning.

“Our number one priority is to learn from the experience we had in the Spring, and deliver improved and rigorous Distance Learning that meets the needs of all students, especially our Multilingual learners, Students with Disabilities and African American students. We are committed to providing families and students with increased support such as webinars with the principals, online tutors, direct communication with teachers and more engaging content and curriculum,” said Superintendent Hilda Maldonado.

Maldonado said there is no question that there were flaws in the “emergency teaching” that was done in a state of shock in the Spring when districts were forced to abruptly close down. “We have taken stock and are learning from those challenges. Teachers will be receiving training on effective distance learning, using only one platform to communicate with students and parents and aligning their lessons, for example.”

School Board President Laura Capps urged the public to follow all the safety measures during this pandemic.

"I implore our community to get this pandemic under control so our county's school children can physically return to class. As a mom, I can't wait for the golden day when our students are back in school, getting the in-person education we all agree is best, and socializing and enjoying all the activities they deserve. To get there, given the Governor's mandate, we ALL need to do our part by social distancing and making short term sacrifices and our leaders need to -- at a minimum - enforce mask wearing and other basic safety measures," said Capps.

The next SBUSD school board meeting is set for 6:30 pm, Tuesday, July 21 and will be held virtually.

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ABC109 JUL 17, 2020 04:11 PM

GET YOUR SH*T TOGETHER, SANTA MARIA!

LETMEGO JUL 17, 2020 04:16 PM

The south coast's case rate is actually also too high, even without Santa Maria. (Although it's half the rate.)

MACPUZL JUL 17, 2020 04:11 PM

Sanity prevails!

SACJON JUL 17, 2020 04:16 PM

Thanks a ton to all you lazy, stupid morons who refused to wear a mask, ignored social distancing, insisted on still going to bars and restaurants and having parties. You all should be required to pay for our kids tutors so they don't fall behind (even more) the rest of the country. You should all be freakin ashamed of yourselves!

LETMEGO JUL 17, 2020 05:09 PM

The rest of the country is gonna be in the same boat. My friends in the DC area are freaking out. Of course, they are pretty type-A hard core.

LOOSECANNON JUL 17, 2020 05:09 PM

It's official: TEACHERS are INESSENTIAL WORKERS. A bad decision, bordering on disgraceful. This was a foregone conclusion and a big middle finger to working families. The one-size-fits-all approach to a diverse county in a diverse state makes little sense. There is no epidemiological reason why classes couldn't have been held outside on school grounds, with fresh air and UV rays acting as a natural disinfectant.

CHEMICALSUPERFREAK JUL 17, 2020 05:31 PM

CANNON: Two points. First, I kind of agree, many teachers will be come inessential, since virtual classrooms effectively have no limits in terms of capacity. This of course is with the expectation that you'd need to have teaching assistants hold separate discussion sections to answer individual student questions on the material. Second, outside has it's downsides too, namely distractions. Do you remembers being bored and staring out the window at the trees, etc.? I do. Sometimes it was just more interesting. Outside kids will be subjected to all kinds of competition from the sights and sounds of nature and cars going by. Exams would be really tough for some kids under those circumstances. But the Greeks excelled in academics and they held outside classes, so who knows.

PSTARSR JUL 17, 2020 06:09 PM

there are lots of reasons. 1. if we knew how this virus acted we wouldnt be in this situation, remember to respect the fact that this is 6 months old and WE DO NOT KNOW. 2. one size fits all? you live in a society, comprised of lots of people, sometimes you have to do something for the greater good of ALL not just the few. 3. there is no epidemiological reason? I cant name 1 COVID-19. no matter the plan, there is no safe way currently to do this, thats why we are NOT doing it. I have 2 kids and am happy to see the smarter group prevail. heaven forbid people hang out with their children for a few more months and actually teach them something. remember teachers are NOT baby sitters and they are AT RISK of getting sick like everyone else.

LOOSECANNON JUL 17, 2020 06:48 PM

PSTARSR, We know quite a lot about the virus. The optimum environment for transmission is when people are confined to poorly-ventilated indoor spaces, maskless, with no physical distancing. All of this could be mitigated by having classes outside. California has a warm climate, so we can do it. I share your "greater good of ALL" concern. What works in Santa Barbara for outdoor learning wouldn't work in Buffalo, NY, where students would freeze to death in the winter. But does that mean we shut everything down in Santa Barbara because we feel bad about the kids of Buffalo? I think not. I have one kid who received substandard education during the Spring and the thought of her being on Zoom in the Fall is dreadful. She has been confined at home and is becoming increasingly bored and listless. Her parents, myself included, are too stressed, financially and otherwise, to spend much time educating her, nor are we qualified to do so. Rich kids are getting private tutors for one-on-one learning. MIddle-income and poor kids are being left behind, perpetuating a miserable class and racial system based on inequality. Anyway you look at it, opening or closing, there are going to be negatives. I just don't think we're taking the education of the next generation seriously. I hate to be unkind, but this is another victory for the gerontocracy, government of old, rich people for old, rich people, with little concern for the future generation.

LOOSECANNON JUL 17, 2020 06:58 PM

And with respect to the teachers, PSTARSR, if they're concerned about catching "germs" (I know, I know, COVID is viral, not bacterial) from kids, they chose the wrong profession. It may be time for some teachers, old and/or with serious health conditions, to consider retirement, disability insurance, or another profession. Some could hold Zoom classes, I suppose, but I think most of the people in the teaching profession are, like the rest of us, in reasonably good health and could conduct in-person classes, just as most of us in the community are trying to go about our everyday business attempting to mitigate our risk of infection. Anyway, this is pretty much a waste of time, bellyaching. It was all a foregone conclusion.

420722 JUL 17, 2020 07:12 PM

Cannon-I couldn’t agree more with your 6:09 comment. You’re Buffalo comment is spot on. With our luck they’ll probably be back in school before Newsom get his crap together.

SBSUNNY JUL 17, 2020 10:56 PM

There is no cure for this particular highly contagious “germ” and that’s the problem.

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THINK JUL 17, 2020 05:19 PM

Sadly, keeping the kids separated and at home is bringing back segregation.

SACJON JUL 17, 2020 05:34 PM

THINK - not so much segregation, but it will create an even deeper divide between the haves and have nots. Hope Ranch parents are hiring private tutors to take over their kids educations, while working class families are lucky to have a spare room for their kids to focus in. This will be disastrous for our kids. I'm a Biden-supporting liberal (and proud of it), but this is a CRAP decision by Newsom. In fact, Biden came out TODAY with a plan to get all schools re-opened. Too bad Newsom didn't wait to read it.

SBLOCAL1967 JUL 17, 2020 06:21 PM

Interesting that Gavin also won't let private schools go in person - why? wants to minimize haves getting an upper hand on the have nots. Sort of like Goleta/SB/Carp being penalized for North County numbers. Imagine if we are not able to open schools up due to Lompoc prison numbers. Be careful Teachers Union this whole thing may backfire on you. For many years companies thought about allowing more work-from-home to minimize office space cost but did not want to take the risk. Well now many companies realize WFH is not impacting productivity and in turn are not renewing leases. Obviously virtual learning is more cost effective and if proven to be just as effective, the result will be the need for less teachers.

420722 JUL 17, 2020 06:02 PM

There is absolutely no reason they couldn’t make this work for in-person. Use the cafeteria, the theatre stage, the sports fields, blacktops, empty or unused classrooms, the library etc. as makeshift classrooms. Anybody have kids in summer camps right now? Funny how that is going so well, no cases after more than a month of children from several different households together all day. IT CAN WORK! They need to pull their head out of Newsom’s ass and tell them we can handle the challenge.

PSTARSR JUL 17, 2020 06:05 PM

its actually NOT going well if you look it up. lots of schools that are "in session" are reporting cases, and sick kids. its not going well for others

BASICINFO805 JUL 17, 2020 10:09 PM

Really? Give us some documentation of what you're stating then. I think you may be making that up. Never heard of such.

BASICINFO805 JUL 17, 2020 10:09 PM

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SACJON JUL 17, 2020 10:26 PM

420722 - for once, I agree with you! Newsom's lazy order is pathetic! We needed creativity, not fatalism. this is despicable and shameful!

SBSUNNY JUL 17, 2020 10:56 PM

There is no cure for this particular highly contagious “germ” and that’s the problem.

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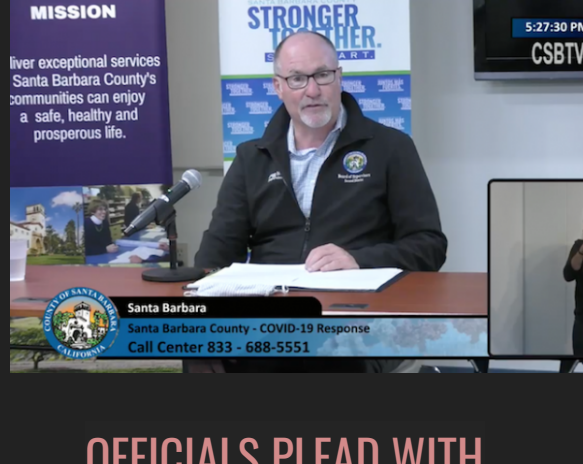

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